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December 8, 2014

Commissioner Esther Valadez, Chair
Regional Planning Commission
Los Angeles County
320 West Temple Street, Rm 1350
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Comments by the Building Industry Association on the
County's proposed HMA Ordinances

Dear Commissioner Valadez, Chair:

The Building Industry Association of Southern California, Inc., Los Angeles/Ventura Counties Chapter (BIA) is a regional trade association that represents more than 1,100 member companies and their respective employees involved in the building industry. The BIA serves as the collective voice of the building industry. The facts, opinions and information contained herein are the result of a coordinated effort made by an esteemed group of industry leaders who have genuine concern for the future of housing in Los Angeles County. This group of industry leaders, part of the BIA's governmental affairs committee, are the "best of the best" when it comes to thoughtful and responsible use of the County's land resources to create thriving and sustainable communities.

The BIA governmental affairs committee and its builder members have closely watched and participated in the process of developing the Hillside Management Area (HMA) Ordinance, and monitored the development of the County's new general plan. To date much of what industry representatives have requested or suggested have not be incorporated in the update.

Additionally, in preparation for a Planning Commission Hearing on December 10, 2014, the latest version of the HMA ordinance was released on November 25, 2014, just prior to the Thanksgiving Holiday. This was after many months of no activity on the ordinance and does not allow ample time to consider the impact of the ordinance on the dire need of housing production in the County.

The update included the Hillside Design Guidelines as an appendix to the ordinance. This inclusion codifies what is typically a living document which guides development with regard to the ordinance policies. The industry needs time to consider all aspects of including these guidelines within the ordinance itself.

The BIA is hereby requesting the HMA ordinance be separated from the General Plan to provide an opportunity to fully consider and vet the latest changes and consequences of codifying the Hillside Design Guidelines in the ordinance, if approved. The BIA and our membership reaffirm their commitment to assist with the drafting of balanced and responsible ordinances and plans that will result in the responsible use of the County's land resources. We feel that not enough has been done to satisfy the concerns of our membership. While the open dialogue and willingness of County staff to embrace or positions has been too limited to achieve a balanced result to date, we believe that such a result can be obtained.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Piasky".

Tim Piasky
CEO

Cc: Regional Planning Commissioners
Richard Bruckner, Director, Department of Regional Planning